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SERIES 3.

Some Travancore Dynastic Records.

Second Series.

(By M. Rajaraja Varma Raja, M. A., B. L., Vice-President of the Kerala Society.)

In the first series of records published in the *Kerala Society Papers*, Series I, I gave the chronology of the sovereigns of Travancore from A. D. 1544 to 1667. I referred there to the several adoptions made during the period. The records bearing on them I propose to publish in this second series. These records come from the same source as the former ones and form part of the self-same *paditharam* (scales of customary expenditure) accounts.

In Document No. VIII of the first series (p. 18 *ante*) mention was made of an adoption in 750 M. E. (A. D. 1574—75) of Prince Cheriya Rama Varma and a Princess from the Thrippapur Swarupam in Attingal to the Chiravay Swarupam. This Prince Cheriya Rama Varma had his estate in Manalikara, a village in the Kalkulam taluk. What the necessity or occasion for this adoption was is not apparent. On subsequent occasions also, no reason is mentioned for the adoptions. Usually an adoption is resorted to only when there is no direct heir to continue the line of succession. Under the Marumakkathayam law, it is unusual to adopt

male members, as their children are not members of the tarwad (family). But in the absence of a competent person to manage the tarwad, male members are sometimes adopted to avoid an interregnum which would arise if the birth of an heir to the female member adopted were to be awaited. It is also unusual, if not against the *Sastras*, to adopt married members with or without issue. The Chiravay Swarupam was governed by the *Marumakkathayam* law of succession, and hence, I surmise, a Princess was adopted to continue the line and a Prince to fill the throne.

Another point deserves mention. Adoption is made only from the kindred, that is, from families of the same class or caste if not of the same clan. Hence Thrippapur and Chiravay Swarupams must have been kindreds or branches of the same clan. If the theory that the Chiravay Swarupam migrated from the Tamil country is correct, it has to be assumed that it changed its system of inheritance from Makkathayam to Marumakkathayam after this migration.

The first document of the second series is dated the 26th Panguny 754 M. E. It is marked A in the Appendix. On the 19th Kartiga 754 M. E., Martanda Varma assumed (p. 8, No. 6) the headship of the Chiravay Swaroopam (*Vide* Document IX of the first series, pp. 18, 19 *ante*). Four months after his accession, on the 26th Panguny, Princes Rama Varma and Aditya Varma were adopted into the Chiravay Swaroopam. The ceremony took place at the Kuzhithura Koikal (palace). The document does not say to what families the adoptees belonged: Nor does it give any reason why, so soon after the adoption of 750 M. E., it was found necessary to resort to it again. It is significant that this time two male members alone were adopted. It may be presumed that it had to be done owing to the death of Cheriya Rama Varma adopted in 750 M. E. and the want of a male issue to the Rani taken along with him. As to the family from which the new adoptees were taken, it may be surmised that they belonged to the Thrippapur Swaroopam, in one of the branches of which we find the names (Rama Varma Ilamura & Aditya Varma of Nattalam) of these two Princes along with the lady who was adopted in 750 M. E. (*Vide* p. 18 *ante*, Document VIII of the first series).

The second Document marked B in the Appendix is dated the 9th Tai 797 M. E. It records a tripartite adoption between the Thrippapur Swaroopam, the Chiravay Swaroopam and the Poka Thayvazhi Senior branch. The arrangement was come to and the agreement executed at the Pullikode Koikal, Trivandrum. Ravi Varma (p. 10, No. 11) was then the

Sovereign (*Vide* p. 21 *ante*, Document XV of the first series). He was the head of both the Chiravay and Thrippapur Swaroopams. These two Swaroopams had already become consanguinous by previous adoptions. In this adoption, Ravi Varma of the Trippapur Swaroopam and head of the Chiravay Swaroopam, Prince Martanda Varma (Anusham star), two Junior Princesses of Attingal born in the Atham and Ayilyam stars were adopted into the Pokam Thayvazhi senior branch, where there were two members viz., Virakerala Varma born in the Moolam star and Aditya Varma born in the Makayiram star. Virakerala Varma senior member of Pokam (see above) and Aditya Varma were adopted into the Thrippapur Swaroopam at the same time and both the Sovereigns Ravi Varma Senior member of the Chiravay Swaroopam, and Prince Martanda Varma sponsored this arrangement.

From the nature of this document it may not be amiss to surmise that these adoptions were effected more in view of political than of family necessity. For, in the present instance, we find that there were both male and female members in the ruling family at the time of the adoption. It was therefore done to consolidate the interests of the several branches. I am confirmed in this inference by the third and fourth documents in the series marked C and D in the Appendix. Document C is an agreement executed in 797 M. E., the same year of the adoptions mentioned *supra*, between the head of the Chiravay Swaroopam and Vira Kerala Varma head of the Pokam Thayvazhi to the effect that the latter will

not act anywise without the assent of the former, the senior brother, and will not co-operate with any one who acts against him. In this document mention is made of the Elayadathu Swaroopam, i. e., the royal family of Kottarakkara, near Quilon in Travancore.

The next document is marked D in the Appendix. It is dated the 3rd Adi 798 M. E. It also records another mutual adoption, this time between the Thrippapur Swaroopam and the Kunnummel Elayidam Swaroopam (of Kottarakara), and the Chiravay Swaroopam. The second one evidently is the Elayidam Swaroopam referred to in the agreement concluded in the previous year. This document states that King Ravi Varma head of the Chiravay Swaroopam adopted Vira Kerala Varma born in the star Pooyam, of Kunnummel Elayidam Swaroopam and the latter took three male members of the Chiravay Swaroopam and three female members of the Attingal or Thrippapur Swaroopam as members of the Elayidam Swaroopam. The names of these members are enumerated in the document. They are (1) King Ravi Varma (2) Martanda Varma born in Anusham star, and (3) Rama Varma born in the star Swathi, (4) Attingal Senior Rani born in the star Pooram, (5) Attingal Junior Rani born in the star Atham, and (6) a Princess born in the star Makayiram. The transaction was effected at Karuppu-koikal in Trivandrum and the auspicious hour is also mentioned.

Till now adoptions were made within the limits of the State. They effected the amalgamation of the Chiravay, Thrip-

papur, and Kunnummel Elayidam Swaroopams and Pokam Thayvazhi (senior branch) by bonds of kinship. There can be little doubt now that this device was resorted to for the consolidation and security of the ruling family. The next attempt was to bring in Cochin also into alliance by the same method. Document E in the Appendix records two adoptions of members of the Vellarappalli family into the Attingal family. Vellarappalli is the original home of the Cochin royal house. These events took place on the 13th Vaikasi 805 M. E. and 27th Purattasi 805 M. E. The record enumerates the members of the family at the time of the second adoption and specifies the exact relationship to them of the adoptee re-named Ravi Varma thus:—(1) nephew of the ruling Sovereign Ravi Varma; (2) younger brother of Prince Martanda Varma; (3) Son of Chithira Thirunal, Senior Rani and Atham Thirunal, Junior Rani of Attingal; (4) brother of Ayilyam Thirunal, First Princess and Pooram Thirunal, Second Princess, Attingal; (5) elder brother of Rama Varma Kochunni Pandarathil and of Aditya Varma Kochunni Pandarathil who had been adopted on a former occasion; and (6) uncle of Makayiram Thirunal, Princess of Attingal. Thus there were nine members, both male and female, in the family at the time. The adoption was made after securing the consent of Lakshmi Amma, younger sister of the adoptee's mother, and after changing his name to Ravi Varma. *Datta Homam* (sacrificial fire for adoption) was lit by Kakkad, who is even now the hereditary priest of the Travancore Royal House. The particular

name of the adoptee is not given, and in the document he is referred to as Koil Pandarathil, and Raja Koil Pandarathil, which are merely titles of honour. Another fact worth noting is that, among the persons who decided upon the adoption, and to whom obeisance was paid by the adoptee, is the head of Chethunganad (Quilon). From Document No. XV (p. 21) of the first series dated 795 M. E., it will be found that the senior and one junior member of Chethunganad were called in by King Ravi Varma to settle the disputes of the Sri Padmanabha temple in Trivandrum and that they were initiated into the Thrippapur Swaroopam which had sway over the temple. Chethunganad Kallikka Swaroopam had thus become allied to the Travancore ruling family. Soon after the adoption, Ravi Varma the adoptee was required to perform the funeral obsequies of Pooram Thirunal, the Senior Rani of Attingal (*Vide* also Document D) on the tenth day after her demise. This was done to cement the relationship created by the adoption rather than for want of a natural heir to the deceased. This inference is inevitable as there were eight other surviving members in the family as seen from the list given above.

This document is important in more respects than one. In the first place, it shows the equality of status between the royal houses of both Travancore and Cochin. Secondly, to cement the amity of distinct families of equal status, the expediency of adoption was resorted to instead of marriage alliance. Thirdly, the adoption of 806 M. E., was not the sole instance of adoption from Vellarappalli,

but there was a previous adoption in 805 M. E. of one Rama Varma Kochunni Pandarathil and Aditya Varma Kochunni Pandarathil (*Vide* subsequent document F also). Fourthly, the position of the adoptee in the family was exactly specified, evidently because he was brought in from a separate stock.

It would have been significant if any confirmatory record could have been found in Cochin for these transactions. There is however no reference to them either in the Cochin or the Travancore State Manual. This foreign adoption is therefore brought to light for the first time and deserves further investigation.

The next document in the series, marked F in the Appendix, records a third adoption from Vellarappalli, Cochin. Unlike the previous records, it gives the reason for the adoption. The long reign of King Ravi Varma came to an end in 838 M. E. He was succeeded by King Rama Varma. (See *ante*, p. 12, No. 12). He died on the 12th Purattasy 847 M. E. (*vide* Document XVI, p. 25 of the first series). The document now under reference is dated the 20th Ani 847 M. E. It states that King Aditya Varma, having performed the funeral rites of his predecessor, viz. King Rama Varma, was unable, owing to indisposition, to continue the *sraddha* after the 41st day. In the absence of a younger member to perform the *deeksha*, i. e. the daily offering of oblation for a full year, messengers were sent to fetch Rama Koyil Pandala from Ullarappalli (Vellarappalli). This Rama Koyil Pandala is stated to be the nephew of King Aditya Varma. He came to Kalkulam the then capital, and was

performing the *śraddha* of the deceased king. Then he was asked to come to Trivandrum by the commands of King Aditya Varma, Ayilyam Thirunal Senior Rani of Attingal, Makayirom Thirunal Junior Rani and Aswathi Thirunal, First Princess. The messenger sent was one Edathara Devan Thrivikraman (a Brahmin). Rama Koyil came accordingly and stayed in the Sripadam, Koikal, Trivandrum. A dispute then arose, regarding the adoption of Rama Koyil, among the members of the family and Kerala Varma of Pokam Thayvazhi who was also present at Trivandrum. But after discussion it was amicably settled. Evidently the cause of dispute arose on account of Rami Varma of Pokam Thayvazhi who had probably been put forward as a candidate. Rama Koyil along with another called Kochu Rama Unni Pandarathil were adopted for Iraniel Chinganallur Palace. The ceremony of the first adoption was performed at Karippukoikal, Trivandrum, early morning on the 20th Ani 847 M. E. Tuesday, when the moon was in the Makam star and the day of the moon was Panchami of the bright half. The second adoption took place the very next day, Wednesday 21st Ani.

There are several interesting points to be noted in this record. Firstly, how did Rama Koyil become the nephew of King Aditya Varma? If this Aditya Varma is the same as the one mentioned in document E with the surname of Kochu Pandarathil, then this Rama Koyil should also be the nephew of the adoptee from Vellarappalli who was given the name of Ravi Varma. In any case, the members of the Vellarappalli family were it seems

treated as kinsfolk from whom persons could be indented upon when needed for Travancore.

Secondly, why was not advantage taken of the members of the Poka Thayvazhi and why was a candidate from far away Cochin preferred to them? The record shows that there were present at Trivandrum at least two members of the Poka Thayvazhi at the time, viz., Kerala Varma and Rama Varma. Discussion also appears to have turned on that point between the Sovereign, the Attingal Rani, and Poka Thayvazhi Kerala Varma. The record does not give any indication except that the amicable settlement was to take Rama Koyil as the heir to Iraniel Chinganallur.

Thirdly, Iraniel Chinganallur near Kalkulam, the capital at the time, appears to have been the demesne of the heir to the throne, as may be inferred from allotments of lands to the Princes of the blood, about which I have come across certain documents. These I hope to publish later on.

Fourthly, the use of the word *deppan* meaning 'to adopt' is curious. It shows the ingenuity of the scribes to coin words or shorthand symbols for the occasion.

In the introduction to the Padappattu published as No. 5 in the *Srimulam Malayalam Series*, Mr. S Parameswara Aiyar states that one Raghavan Koyil *alias* Raman Koyil was the chief minister of Rani Gangadharalakshmi of Cochin at the time of the Dutch invasion and he is said to have been a native of Travancore. In the text of the Padappattu he is stated

to be a *Vashakovil*, i. e. a Kshatriya who is not a ruler.

Again, there is the following passage there :

“മറിവനിഞ്ഞുമാമർകോയിലുമപ്പോൾ
വിളിച്ചിത്രതൻപേവുകകൊരൊയല്ലാവു.

(*vide* pp. 27 and 34). This last event took place sometime after the 27th Makaram 837 of the Kollam era :—

“ഇതുകാലം കൊല്ലമിരുന്നാലു തുറ
മതിനുമേലിൽ മുപ്പതു മേശം പൊന്ന
മകരമാസത്തിലിരുപത്തൊഴായി
പകച്ചിടൊതൊരുമിനമറിഞ്ഞാലും.
തിഥിപ്രതിപദം ധവളമായതു
കളുകമായനാളഴകിയായിലും
കരുതിക്കേൾക്കവെള്ളിയാകമാപ്പേയും
രെയിച്ചിടനും മുടിഞ്ഞരചന്ദ്രൻ.
പതിക്കുമാവിച്ചപകയോർതമ്മെയും
പതിച്ചരാമർകോയിലുമൊളിച്ചുപോയ്”
മരുവികോതവർമ്മരൊരുങ്ങിച്ചു
മുറിവിന്നചില ചികിത്സചെയ്തുകൻ
മരിച്ചുപരതകളിരുന്ന രാത്രിയിൽ”

This event is mentioned in the Cochin State Manual also (*vide* p. 91) where the

name is given as Raghavan Koil. Rama Koyil was adopted into Travancore in 847 M. E. i. e. 10 years afterwards according to our record. Whether this Rama Koyil is the same as the one mentioned in the Patappattu requires further evidence.

Again, in the Cochin State Manual it is stated “when the latter (i. e. Rama Varma, the prince adopted from the Chazhur branch: died six years later, it was generally thought that his death made the way clear for the Mutta Thayvazhi princes. But the Portuguese and the Travancore prince Ramana Koil were not disposed to acquiesce in this arrangement” &c. (page 87). This was in 1656 A. D. (831 M. E.) i. e. 16 years before the adoption mentioned in document G. It presupposes an earlier connection between Rama Koyil's family and the Travancore ruling house and it is this perhaps that documents E & F as well as another ola of 806 M. E. record. Further investigation in the archives of Cochin and Travancore may, it is hoped, clear up the mystery.